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H.E. AMB. A.

UPR WORKING GROUP - TENTH SESSION

GOPINATHAN

(24 January - 4 February, 2011)

UPR of AUSTRALIA - INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

January 27, 2011; 1430-1730 hrs

INTERVENTION BY INDIA

Mr. President,

India welcomes the delegation of Australia led by and thanks the delegation for its presentation. Australia's National Report highlights the initiatives taken by the Government in recent years with regard to human rights, including the adoption, *inter-alia*, of Australia's Human Rights Framework in 2010. In particular, the Report highlights the commitment made by the Government for reconciliation with indigenous peoples, including its formal support for the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the historic formal national apology and the establishment of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples. Given the social indicators for indigenous peoples, it is encouraging to note the Government's commitment to invest in housing, health, early childhood development, education and remote service delivery to advance their fundamental social and economic rights.

Mr. President,

2. The National Report states that the assault rates in Australia are "below average" in comparison with other OECD countries. In this context, we take note that the National Report acknowledges the concerns expressed about the safety of Indian students in Australia, in view of a series of attacks on Indian students, as well as members of the Indian community, in the recent past, some of which have resulted in tragic deaths. In September 2010, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) expressed its concerns with regard to racially motivated assaults on Indian students. We note the measures taken by the Australian Government, and the Australian states and territories, in 2010 to address concerns over the safety and well-being of Indian students in the country. We also welcome the Government's International Students Strategy for Australia adopted in October 2010. We sincerely hope that the Government would ensure the safety of all people of Indian origin - indeed of all ethnic origins - in the country, in line with the Government's stated commitment, as mentioned in its National Report, to create a fairer and more inclusive Australia, with cultural diversity as a central feature of its national identity.

3. Finally, in view of the concern expressed by many treaty bodies, we recommend that Australia grant comprehensive protection to rights of equality and non-discrimination in its federal law.

Thank you, Mr. President.
